



## A propos de ce livre

Ceci est une copie numérique d'un ouvrage conservé depuis des générations dans les rayonnages d'une bibliothèque avant d'être numérisé avec précaution par Google dans le cadre d'un projet visant à permettre aux internautes de découvrir l'ensemble du patrimoine littéraire mondial en ligne.

Ce livre étant relativement ancien, il n'est plus protégé par la loi sur les droits d'auteur et appartient à présent au domaine public. L'expression "appartenir au domaine public" signifie que le livre en question n'a jamais été soumis aux droits d'auteur ou que ses droits légaux sont arrivés à expiration. Les conditions requises pour qu'un livre tombe dans le domaine public peuvent varier d'un pays à l'autre. Les livres libres de droit sont autant de liens avec le passé. Ils sont les témoins de la richesse de notre histoire, de notre patrimoine culturel et de la connaissance humaine et sont trop souvent difficilement accessibles au public.

Les notes de bas de page et autres annotations en marge du texte présentes dans le volume original sont reprises dans ce fichier, comme un souvenir du long chemin parcouru par l'ouvrage depuis la maison d'édition en passant par la bibliothèque pour finalement se retrouver entre vos mains.

## Consignes d'utilisation

Google est fier de travailler en partenariat avec des bibliothèques à la numérisation des ouvrages appartenant au domaine public et de les rendre ainsi accessibles à tous. Ces livres sont en effet la propriété de tous et de toutes et nous sommes tout simplement les gardiens de ce patrimoine. Il s'agit toutefois d'un projet coûteux. Par conséquent et en vue de poursuivre la diffusion de ces ressources inépuisables, nous avons pris les dispositions nécessaires afin de prévenir les éventuels abus auxquels pourraient se livrer des sites marchands tiers, notamment en instaurant des contraintes techniques relatives aux requêtes automatisées.

Nous vous demandons également de:

- + *Ne pas utiliser les fichiers à des fins commerciales* Nous avons conçu le programme Google Recherche de Livres à l'usage des particuliers. Nous vous demandons donc d'utiliser uniquement ces fichiers à des fins personnelles. Ils ne sauraient en effet être employés dans un quelconque but commercial.
- + *Ne pas procéder à des requêtes automatisées* N'envoyez aucune requête automatisée quelle qu'elle soit au système Google. Si vous effectuez des recherches concernant les logiciels de traduction, la reconnaissance optique de caractères ou tout autre domaine nécessitant de disposer d'importantes quantités de texte, n'hésitez pas à nous contacter. Nous encourageons pour la réalisation de ce type de travaux l'utilisation des ouvrages et documents appartenant au domaine public et serions heureux de vous être utile.
- + *Ne pas supprimer l'attribution* Le filigrane Google contenu dans chaque fichier est indispensable pour informer les internautes de notre projet et leur permettre d'accéder à davantage de documents par l'intermédiaire du Programme Google Recherche de Livres. Ne le supprimez en aucun cas.
- + *Rester dans la légalité* Quelle que soit l'utilisation que vous comptez faire des fichiers, n'oubliez pas qu'il est de votre responsabilité de veiller à respecter la loi. Si un ouvrage appartient au domaine public américain, n'en déduisez pas pour autant qu'il en va de même dans les autres pays. La durée légale des droits d'auteur d'un livre varie d'un pays à l'autre. Nous ne sommes donc pas en mesure de répertorier les ouvrages dont l'utilisation est autorisée et ceux dont elle ne l'est pas. Ne croyez pas que le simple fait d'afficher un livre sur Google Recherche de Livres signifie que celui-ci peut être utilisé de quelque façon que ce soit dans le monde entier. La condamnation à laquelle vous vous exposeriez en cas de violation des droits d'auteur peut être sévère.

## À propos du service Google Recherche de Livres

En favorisant la recherche et l'accès à un nombre croissant de livres disponibles dans de nombreuses langues, dont le français, Google souhaite contribuer à promouvoir la diversité culturelle grâce à Google Recherche de Livres. En effet, le Programme Google Recherche de Livres permet aux internautes de découvrir le patrimoine littéraire mondial, tout en aidant les auteurs et les éditeurs à élargir leur public. Vous pouvez effectuer des recherches en ligne dans le texte intégral de cet ouvrage à l'adresse <http://books.google.com>



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

# Notes on the construction of the Yoruba language

J B. Wood

$\frac{1}{3/10}$

Afr. e. 118

H. K. R. ton.

hago.









NOTES  
ON THE  
CONSTRUCTION  
OF THE  
YORUBA LANGUAGE;

BY THE  
REV. J. B. WOOD,  
*Missionary of the Church Missionary Society.*

EXETER:  
JAMES TOWNSEND, PRINTER, GANDY STREET,  
1879.



## PREFATORY NOTE.

These Notes were, for the most part, written in fulfilment of a promise given to a gentleman interested in African languages, who was desirous of possessing such an outline of the formation of the Yoruba language as would enable him to form a tolerably correct notion of its character; but they were written without the remotest idea that they would appear in their present form. It was only after much hesitation that the writer consented to their going to press; but consent having been given, the opportunity was taken of adding a few observations here and there, and of increasing the number of illustrative examples. But even now the paper is confessedly very meagre. It is hoped that it will be taken for just what it was intended to be, namely, a brief outline of the structure and character of the Yoruba language.



The Yoruba alphabet consists of twenty-five letters and three diphthongs. These signs cover nearly the whole of the sounds in the language. As in other languages so it is in Yoruba, the word-signs are subject to modifications from accent and connection; indeed, in Yoruba this is the case to an exceptionally large degree.

The letters are :—

- (a) Vowels, a, e, ẹ, i, o, ọ, and u;
- (b) Diphthongs, ai oi au, and,
- (c) Consonants, b, d, f, g, gb, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, r, s, ʃ, t, w, y.

a	has the sound of	a	in 'fast.'
e	" " " "	a	" 'fate.'
ẹ	" " " "	e	" 'met.'
i	" " " "	i	" 'ravine.'
o	" " " "	o	" 'no.'
ọ	" " " "	aw	" 'law.'
u	" " " "	oo	" 'moon.'

The English language has no words which have sounds precisely similar to those of the three diphthongs. The *i* in 'mile' is somewhat like the sound of *ai*; and *oi* in 'voice' is a nearer approach to the sound of *oi*; no word presents itself which will serve to illustrate the sound of *au*. Perhaps the clearest idea of the sounds of these diphthongs will be obtained by thinking of the sound of each of the two letters, then uniting them, but preserving something of the sound of each and pronouncing the two in quick succession.

b has the same sound as in English.

d

g is always hard, as in 'garden.'

gb represents to European ears a sort of double sound, made up of both of these letters, and difficult for European organs of speech to produce correctly.

- h has always its distinct sound as an aspirate.
- j is always soft, as in 'joiner,' and like
- k has the same sound as in English.
- l, m, n, r, s, t, w, and y are the same as in English, except that the vowel which is joined to the consonant in pronouncing it, is always i, and not, as in English, e, and it is placed *after* and not *before* the consonant, thus, li mi ni, etc.
- p represents a kind of double sound, which in English would have kp for its sign.
- ş has the same sound as sh in 'shall.'

The primitive words of the Yoruba language were not very numerous. They may have been, altogether, five or six hundred, and may have been divided in something like the following proportions:—

1. Nouns: two hundred and fifty to three hundred.
2. Verbs: a hundred and fifty to two hundred.
3. The rest consisting of personal and other pronouns, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections.

The parts of speech in Yoruba are nine in number.

#### ARTICLE.

Some doubt if the language should be credited with the possession of an Article. The reasons adduced for and against the existence of an Article in English would obtain in Yoruba, and be as applicable on the one side as on the other. The word 'kan,' part of 'ọkan,' *one*, is used as an indefinite Article; as, ọkọnrin kan, *a man*. 'Nā' is used as, a definite Article; as, obinrin nā, *the woman*. The truth seems to be that the words 'kan' and 'nā' are frequently, but more especially the latter, used as Articles, whilst 'nā' is undoubtedly employed sometimes as a demonstrative adjective.

#### NOUNS.

The Yoruba language is remarkable for the facilities

it affords for word-building ; and nowhere is this more manifest than in the numerous ways in which nouns are formed. These various formations are worthy of some careful notice.

### 1.—NOUNS FORMED BY VOWEL PREFIXES.

Yoruba verbs are both primitive, and derivative or compound. From both of these kinds of verbs nouns are formed by prefixing to them one of the vowels a, e, ẹ, i, o, or, ọ. It may suffice to illustrate this formation in the case of primitive verbs only.

Examples :—

1. Ke, *to cut* ; ăke, *an axe*.
2. Bu, *to abuse* ; ěbu, *abuse*.
3. Mi, *to breathe* ; ẹmi, *spirit*.
4. Wà, *to be* ; ìwa, *existence*.
5. Jò, *to drip* ; òjo, *rain*.
6. Dẹ, *to hunt* ; ọdẹ, *a hunter*.

These examples furnish instances of several different kinds of nouns formed in this manner. (1) In the first, the noun derived from the verb signifies the instrument by which the idea of the verb is carried out. (2) In the second and fifth examples the ideas of the verbs appear in a substantive form. (3) The relation in the third instance between the verb and the noun derived from it is at once apparent and natural. (4) From a verb 'to be,' in the fourth example, is obtained a noun signifying existence ; and (5) in the last case, there is a noun denoting the agent of the act indicated by the verb.

Nouns so formed often have (but the exceptions to this rule, if a rule it may be called, are very numerous) the vowel which the euphonic concord requires, *i.e.*, the vowel of the verb becomes the prefix by which the noun is formed ; *e.g.*, ba, *to meet* ; aba, *a meeting* ; gbé, *to perish* ; egbé, *perdition* ; fẹ, *to find fault with* ; ẹfẹ, *fault-finding* ; ọ, *to open* ; ọ, *an opening* ; ró, *to cause pain* ; oró, *pain* ; rọ, *to narrate* ; ọrọ, *a word, a speech*.

Nouns of this formation often have 'a' for their prefix when they are concrete, and 'i' when they

indicate *action*; e.g., *bò*, to cover; *àbo*, a covering, a shelter (concrete); *ibo*, covering (the act of covering). But many nouns of the latter kind are concrete; they are distinguishable only by their use.

## 2.—NOUNS FORMED BY SYLLABIC PREFIXES.

1. *Aba*, from 'a,' prefix, and *ba*, to meet, is placed before verbs to form nouns implying *union*; e.g., *abata*—from 'aba' and *tà*, to sell; a market-place: *abapade*—from 'aba' and *pade*, to meet; a chance, an occurrence.

2. *Abi*, from 'a,' prefix, and *bi*, now a conjunction and denoting condition, is prefixed to compound nouns to form nouns expressing *condition* or *quality*, as, *abilekọ*—from 'abi,' prefix, *li*, to have; *ẹkọ* or *ọkọ*, a husband; the condition of having a husband, i.e., a married woman: *abiyé*—from 'abi' and *iyé*, feathers; a feathered creature; *abiwo*—from 'abi' and *iwo*, a horn; a horned animal.

3. *Abu*, from 'a,' prefix, and *bù*, to give, signifies *something added to*; e.g., *abumo*—from 'abu,' prefix, and *mọ*, to or against; an addition, an exaggeration; *abusọ*—from 'abu' and *sọ*, to speak; a falsehood.

4. *Ada*, from 'a,' and *dá*, to make, is placed before verbs to form nouns expressive of (1) the agent or doer of an action; e.g., *adaniduro*—from 'ada;' *ẹni*, a person; *duro*, to stand still; a detainer: and (2) the result of an action; as, *adalu*—'ada,' and *lú*, to mingle several things together; adulteration.

5. *Afi*, from 'a' and *fi*, to make, is prefixed to compound words to form words embodying the idea of action; e.g., *hàn*, to appear; *fihan*, to show; *ifhan*, a showing; *afọnahan*, a shower-of-the-way, i.e., a guide.

6. *Am*, from 'a,' and *mọ*, to know, is placed before nouns expressive of mental conditions and operations; e.g., *ẹro*, consideration; *amero*, a discreet person; *oyé*, understanding; *amọye*, an intelligent person. By



prefixing to these enlarged forms, minus the 'a,' the negative particle 'ai' (soon to be noticed), nouns having an opposite meaning are formed, thus, amoye, *an intelligent person*; aimoye, *ignorance*. These words are often used as adjectives. By the addition of 'al,' the possessive particle, to this latter form is obtained alaimoye, *an ignorant or stupid person*.

7. Ati, from 'a' and ti, *from*, is prefixed to verbs to express a kind of abstract idea of the verb in a substantive form; e.g., *še, to do*; *atiše, a to-doing*. This prefix will be noticed again.

8. Bu or ibu, *a place*; as, joko, *to sit down, to rest*; ibujoko, *a resting place, a settlement*.

9. On, is sometimes prefixed to verbs, especially such as have d or gb for their consonants, to form nouns; e.g., *de, to bind*; *onde, a prisoner*; *gbē, to be dry*; *ongbē, dryness, thirst*.

With the exception of the seventh, the foregoing modes of forming nouns are not much used, and several of them are represented by but few examples. It is not improbable that many words of the above kinds have become obsolete, or are now known only to elderly people. Should, as is most likely to be the case, increased mental activity result in the need of forming new compounds to express new ideas or modifications of already existing thoughts, it is easy to foresee that words framed according to this system of prefixes may yet be extensively used in the language.

10. (a) The vowels a, e, ɛ, i, o, and ɔ are, one or another, but as a rule—a rule, however, which has many exceptions—the one which the euphonic concord requires, prefixed to 'l,' which is part of the verb li, *to have*, to form the syllables al, el, ɛl, il, ol, and ɔl; and one of these is placed before nouns to form *nouns of possession*; e.g., *ade—from 'a,' prefix, and de, to put on a hat or crown; a crown*; *alade—from 'al,' syllabic prefix, 'a,' vowel prefix, and de, to crown*; *he who has the crown, i.e., the king*.

(b) The verb li, *to have*, has a second form, namely, 'ni;' 'li,' in accordance with the requirements of euphony,

precedes the vowels a, e, ẹ, o, ọ, and u; this form is changed to 'ni' before i. Owing to this we have the before-mentioned syllabic prefixes with the consonant 'n' in place of 'l,' thus, an, en, ẹn, in, on, ọn; in meaning they are precisely the same as the former, but are not so frequently used.

(c) Sometimes li, for the sake of euphony, becomes lu; as, iranlọwọ, *help*; oluranlọwọ, *a helper*; igbala, *salvation*; olugbala, *a saviour*.

(d) In Yoruba the doer of an action is very frequently regarded as its possessor; e.g., ẹlẹṣẹ, from 'ẹl,' syllabic prefix of possession; 'e,' vowel prefix to form noun; ṣẹ, verb, *to sin*; ẹlẹṣẹ, *he who has sin, i.e., a sinner*.

11. (1) The negative particle 'ai' is prefixed to verbs to form nouns; e.g., ṣe, *to do*; aiṣe, *the not-doing* (abstract idea).

(2) This particle also enters into the construction of words having an affirmative sense, thus, ṣemeṣe, *to be indolent*; aiṣemeṣe, *industry, activity*; iṣiyemeji, *doubt*; aisiyemeji, *certainly*.

(3) Sometimes 'al,' the prefix of possession, is placed before the negative particle 'ai,' to form nouns signifying freedom from that which is indicated by the verb; e.g., lọ, *to go*; ailọ, *the not going* (abstract); alailọ, *he who possesses freedom from going*.

These remarks will be the clearer, perhaps, if illustrated by an example which will exhibit the changes that may be made in the form of a word, and its various meanings at the different stages of its construction. The verb ṣẹ, *to sin*, will do well for this purpose.

Ṣẹ, *to sin*; the original idea.

Ẹṣẹ, *sin*; noun, having ẹ for its prefix, according to the euphonic concord.

Lẹṣẹ, *to have sin*; verb of possession.

Ẹlẹṣẹ, *one who has sin*; noun of possession.

Iṣẹṣẹ, *the act of having sin*.

Ailẹṣẹ, *the condition of being without sin*.

Lailẹṣẹ, *the possession of freedom from sin*.

Alailẹṣẹ, *one who possesses freedom from sin*.

### 3.—NOUNS FORMED BY REDUPLICATION.

1. In Yoruba many compound or derivative verbs are formed by joining a primitive verb to a noun ; thus, *pa*, to kill ; *ẹja*, a fish ; *pa-ẹja*, contracted to *peja*, to kill fish, *i.e.*, to fish. Such compound verbs are sometimes reduplicated to form nouns. Take the instance just mentioned. *Peja*, to fish ; *peja peja*, a fisherman : *ogun*, war ; *jà*, to fight ; *ja-ogun* or *jagun*, to fight or carry on war ; *jagunjagun*, a warrior.

2. (a) Sometimes the verb is reduplicated to form a noun ; *e.g.*, *rí*, to see ; *riri*, a seeing, a thing seen.

(b) Very often this form is subject to changes in the vowel for euphony-sake ; as, *jà*, to fight, should, in accordance with the example given, be *jaja* when reduplicated ; it is not so, however, but *jija* ; so *lọ*, to go, gives not *lọlọ*, a going, but *lilọ* ; and *rà*, to buy, becomes *rira*, a buying, or a thing buyable.

3. A third mode in which such nouns are constructed is, by reduplicating a noun and inserting in it one of the words *de*, *iyi*, *ki*, or *li*.

(a) *De*, to come, to arrive ; *e.g.*, *iran*, a generation ; *iran-de-iran*, or *irandiran*, from generation to generation : *ọwọ*, a hand ; *ọwọ-de-ọwọ*, or *ọwọdọwọ*, from-hand-to-hand, *i.e.*, tradition.

(b) *Iyi*, this, is inserted in the reduplicated word to make it more emphatic ; thus, *ekuru*, dust ; *ekuru-iyi-ekuru*, or *ekuruyekuru*, this dust or this very dust.

(c) *Ki*, any, any whatever, is used in a similar manner ; *e.g.*, *ẹran*, an animal ; *ẹran-ki-ẹran*, or *ẹran-kẹran*, any animal ; *ẹni*, a person ; *ẹni-ki-ẹni*, or *ẹnikẹni*, any person. The same form is sometimes used to express the low view entertained of a person's character, thus, *enia*, a person (a human being, male or female) ; *enia-ki-enia*, or *eniakenia*, a good-for-nothing-person.

(d) *Li*, to have, when it finds a place in a reduplicated noun implies ownership ; as, *ọmọ*, a child ; *ọmọ-ọli-ọmọ*, or *ọmọlọmọ*, the child of the person who owns the child.

## 4.—NOUNS FORMED BY COMPOSITION.

1. Substantives are formed by joining a noun and an adjective; *e.g.*, iyemeji, from iye, *mind*; and meji, *two*, double-mindedness, *i.e.*, *doubt, uncertainty*: ɛni, *a person*; keji, *a second*; ɛnikeji, *a partner, a companion*.

2. Two substantives are joined to form a new one, thus, iyọ, *salt*; oyinbo, *a whiteman*; iyọ-oyinbo, *whiteman's salt, i.e., sugar*: erin, *an elephant*; omi, *water*; erin-omi, or erinmi, *a water-elephant, i.e., a hippopotamus*.

3. (a) A small number of nouns consist each of the prefix 'a' and two verbs, and are abstract in character; *e.g.*, asọtan—from 'a,' prefix, sọ, *to speak*, and tan, *to finish*; *a complete speech*. In such formations the verb and its qualifying word are thrown together; for the 'tan' in this case has the force of an adverb.

(b) Sometimes adverbs (strictly such) take the place of the second verb, as, in the instance just adduced; *e.g.*, agbesoke, from 'a,' prefix; gbẹ, *to lift*; soke, *upwards*; *a lifting upwards*.

4. Several words are joined to form nouns, thus, iyalero, from iya, *mother*; ile, *house*; ero, *a traveller, i.e., mother of the traveller's house*; *a hostess*: ẹlẹsẹnilẹ, from 'el,' possessive prefix; ẹsẹ, *a foot*; ni, prep., *on*; ilẹ, *the ground*; one who has a firm footing, *i.e., a strong man*: afọnrugbin, from 'a,' vowel prefix; fọn, *to scatter or sow*; iru, *seed*; gbin, *to plant*; hence, afọnrugbin, *a sower*.

## PRONOUNS.

It is not needful to enter at length on a consideration of the character and nature of pronouns. One feature of a somewhat remarkable character must not be overlooked, but it will be most suitable to notice this when we come to the verbs.

In Yoruba neither nouns nor pronouns are inflected, consequently any differences there may be between the

nominative and other cases, and there are differences in some instances, are due to other causes than inflection.

The following are the personal pronouns in the nominative case.

#### SINGULAR.

	Primary Forms.	Contracted Forms.
1.	I Emi	Mo, mọ, fut, ng
2.	Thou iwọ	o ọ
3.	He, She, It, on, ọn	o ọ a

#### PLURAL.

1.	We, awa	á
2.	Ye, Ẹnyin	ẹ
3.	They, awọn, 'nwọn	a

#### GENDER.

Gender is indicated in various ways.

1. By the use of words which at once show it; *e.g.*, baba, *father*; iya, *mother*; ọkọnrin, *man*; obinrin, *woman*; agbo, *a ram*; akukọ, *a cock*.

2. (a) When words of the common gender are used of persons and it becomes necessary to specify their gender, it is done by joining to them the words ọkọnrin, *man*; and obinrin, *woman*; thus, ọmọ, *a child* (common gender); ọmọ-ọkọnrin, *a child-man, i.e., a boy*; ọmọ-birin, *a child-woman, i.e., a girl*; iranṣẹ, *a servant* (common gender); iranṣẹkọnrin, *a man-servant*; iranṣẹbinrin, *a woman-servant*.

(b) Gender is shown by the use of the masculine and feminine prefixes 'akọ' and 'abo'; *e.g.*, akọ-ẹṣin, *a horse*; abo-ẹṣin, *a mare*; akọ-malu, *a bull*.

(c) Words are so compounded as to indicate their gender, as bale, made up of baba, *father*, and ile, *house*, *i.e., father of the house*: iyale-iya, *mother*, and ile, *house*, *i.e., mother of the house*; babanla, *grandfather*; iyanla,

*grandmother* ; babalero, from baba, *father* ; ile, *house* ; ero, *a traveller, i.e., father of the traveller's house, host, or landlord.*

### NUMBER.

The plural is formed :—

1. (a) By the use of awon, *they*, before the noun to be pluralized ; thus, awon omode ti de, *the children have arrived.* (b) Some would restrict the use of 'awon' to living creatures, and where there is not life in the objects spoken of in the plural, would use wonyi, *these* ; thus, ile wonyi, *these houses*, instead of awon ile, *they (the) houses.*

2. The plural is sometimes formed by reduplicating the noun and inserting in it a copulative conjunction ; e.g., oniṣowo ati oniṣowo ki iba ti ba ara won wijo, *the traders should not have quarrelled amongst themselves.*

3. Numerals are pluralized by reduplication, as in these examples ; oḡorun, *a hundred* ; oḡororun, *hundreds* ; igba, *two-hundred* ; igbigba (i here take the place of 'a' for euphony-sake), *two-hundreds* ; eḡbḡerun, *a thousand* ; eḡbḡerun, *thousands.*

### CASE.

It has already been mentioned that Yoruba nouns are uninflected, consequently other cases than the nominative are to be distinguished without regard to inflection. There are several means of ascertaining the cases of nouns :—

1. The nominative or subject of the verb is *always* placed before the verb : awon enia ti lo, *the people have departed.*

2. The objective case is known by :—

(a) Its position. Most commonly it immediately follows the governing word ; e.g., mo fẹ aburo mi, *I love my younger brother.* But in sentences of a different construction (which are much less frequently used than those of the kind named), it precedes the governing word, thus, iwọ li a o rí, *thee it is we (or they) shall see, i.e., we shall see thee.*

(b) The mode of address shows the speaker and the person spoken to; *e.g.*, a person near the speaker is addressed, *iwọ ọkọnrin yi*, you man this, *i.e.*, *you who are near me*; to one farther removed the speaker may say, *iwọ ọkọnrin nā*, *you that man*, or *you man there*. This is by no means a disrespectful mode of speaking to a person; it is common, and seems to arise out of necessity. The attention being secured, the remainder of the address is spoken.

3. The possessive case is indicated by:—

(1) Nouns and pronouns placed in juxta-position, the name of the possessor following that of the thing possessed; *e.g.*, *owo baba*, money (of the) father, *i.e.*, *the father's money*; *owo baba mi*, money (of) father mine, or *my father's money*.

(2) Very frequently the preposition 'ti,' *of*, is employed to express the idea of possession; *e.g.*, *ẹṣin ti balogun*, horse of (the) war-chief, *i.e.*, *the war-chief's horse*; *iwe yi jẹ temi*, book this is of me, or *this book is mine*; *fila yi ki iṣe ti aburo mi*, *this is not my brother's cap*.

## ADJECTIVES.

Nouns and pronouns are qualified in a variety of ways:—

1. By the use of adjectives (strictly such, but of which there are not many in the language), as, *enia nla*, a person great, *i.e.*, *a great person*.

2. Words are used to qualify nouns and pronouns which serve equally well the purposes of adverbs; *e.g.*, *enia rere*, a good person; *o ṣe e rere*, you have done it well.

3. Many verbal adjectives are used predicatively. Such adjectives are formed thus, *dun*, to be sweet; *didun*, verbal adj., sweet; *eso didun*, a sweet fruit. It was mentioned that some nouns are formed in this manner. Such nouns are adjectival as well as substantival.

4. The quality of many nouns is expressed by the use of a simple verb; as, *iyo-oyinbo dun*, sugar is sweet.

5. Compound verbs formed by prefixing 'li' or 'ni,' to *have* or *be*, to nouns, are used adjectively; thus, *li*, *to have*, *q̄r̄q̄*, *riches*; *o l̄q̄r̄q̄*, *he is rich*, or literally, *he has riches*.

6. Sometimes a noun is emphasized to give it an adjectival meaning; *e.g.*, *obinrin yi ɕe enia*, *this woman is a person (in truth)*, or *this is a good woman*.

7. Some nouns are qualified by the use of 'ti,' *which*, together with a verb, simple or compound; *e.g.*, *awo ti o f̄q̄*, *the plate which it is broken*, or *the broken plate*; *eso ti o baj̄e*, *the fruit which it is spoiled*, or *the spoiled fruit*.

8. Concrete nouns are placed in apposition with other concrete nouns to qualify them; thus, *q̄l̄q̄gb̄on*, *one who has wisdom*; *q̄l̄q̄gb̄on enia*, *a wise person*. There are many such instances of the use of concrete nouns for adjectival purposes.

#### COMPARISON OF ADJECTIVES.

The Yoruba language can hardly be considered as well provided with the means of making comparisons of the qualities and degrees of nouns; there is a want of definiteness in this respect.

The usual three degrees, namely, the positive, comparative, and superlative exist.

1. The comparative is formed by the addition to the positive of 'jù,' *more, less, better, worse*, etc. (according to the meaning of the word to which it is joined); *e.g.*, *āq̄o yi dara j̄u ti q̄h̄un*, *this cloth is better than that*; *q̄na ilu wa j̄in j̄u ti nyin*, *the way to our town is longer than that to yours*; *īs̄u oko wa dara j̄u ti nyin*, *the yams grown in our farm are better than those of yours*.

2. (1) The superlative is formed by the addition of 'l̄q̄' to the comparative; thus, *āq̄o yi dara j̄u ti q̄h̄un*, *q̄uḡbon ti wa dara j̄u mejiji l̄q̄*, *this cloth is better than that, but ours is better than both, i.e., it is the best*; *iȳanrin wuwo*, *fadaka wuwo j̄u*, *wura wuwo j̄ul̄q̄*, *sand is heavy, silver is heavier, gold is heaviest*.



(2) A kind of emphatic superlative is formed by the addition of 'gbogbo,' *all*, to an ordinary one, thus, o dara jù gbogbo rẹ lọ, *it is the best of all*; o kere jù gbogbo rẹ lọ, *it is the least of all*.

3. A superlative of a kind similar to the last-named is obtained by the use of the verb 'tan,' *to finish, to complete*; e.g., o dara tan, *it is good to the end, i.e., to the last degree*.

## VERBS.

It is hoped that the remarks which have been made on the different points to which attention has been directed, and the illustrations by which they have been accompanied, will, at any rate, to a limited degree, have afforded the means of judging of the nature and character of Yoruba thought, in so far as it is embodied in the substantives of the language, and in the contrivances resorted to for their qualification. In Yoruba verbs, but more especially in the compound verbs, there is much that is interesting and worthy of the attention of such as find pleasure in the study of mental operations, and in judging of such operations by the modes and terms in which they present themselves to an observer. It cannot be attempted in a paper so brief as this is to enter into particulars regarding this feature of Yoruba verbs. Yet the hope is cherished that the following remarks will be of use in this as well as in other respects. Indeed, it would not be possible to present even a brief exposition of the nature and character of these verbs, and of the means by which they are modified to express the changes required by mood and tense, without, at the same time, supplying the student of Mind with material both interesting and valuable.

Yoruba verbs are of three classes, namely, Substantive, Primitive, and Compound.

### 1.—SUBSTANTIVE VERBS.

The Yoruba language is particularly well provided

with verbs which express existence, both absolutely and in various relations. These verbs, ten in number, are, mbè, wà, yà, jẹ, rí, di, ẹ, gbé, ẹ́, and ni or li.

1. Mbè, expresses existence in an absolute sense more readily and completely than any one of the other nine; *e.g.*, Ọlórún mbè, *God is* (exists). In the Imperative mood it is interchangeable with 'wà' and 'gbé'; and 'wà' takes its place in the future tense.

2. Wà, may be described as a verb absolute, but it is hardly such to the degree to which 'mbè,' is. Idowu wà libè? *is Idowu there?* o wà, *he is* (exists). Of all substantive verbs this is the one most used.

3. Yà, expresses existence in a particular state, but in a state which, as a rule, the mind regards as neither natural, ordinary, nor becoming; *e.g.*, o yà 'di, *he is dumb*; o yà ọlẹ, *he is lazy*; o yà ọpe, *he is silly*; o yà ọbọ, *he is a monkey*. This would appear to have been the original use of the word, and in this sense it is mostly used now. It is also used to express the Christian idea of separation to what is good; as, o yà si mimọ, *he is set apart to what is holy*.

4. Jẹ, has several somewhat different meanings; its principal one appears to be to express ownership; as, yio jẹ tirẹ, *it will become yours*.

5. ẹ, to a degree coincides in meaning with jẹ, and appears to be sometimes interchangeable with it, without making much, if any, difference in the sentence where the interchange is made; *e.g.*, Ogundipẹ ki ẹ balogun, Ọlankanẹ li o jẹ oyè nà, *Ogundipe is not balogun, but Sholanke is*. ẹ, like jẹ, implies something of ownership; as, titani ni eyi ẹ? *whose is this?* temi ni ẹ, *it is mine*.

6. Di, *to become*, is probably another form of da, *to make*, and is used when a change regarding a thing or person is contemplated by the speaker; yio di tirẹ, *it will become yours*: on yio di enia rere, *he will become a good man*.

7. Gbé, *to be, to be in a place*, is more especially used

when speaking of retention of, or residence in a place ; e.g., *igbo li ẹranko igbé*, bush it is wild animals are accustomed to live (or be) *i.e.*, *wild animals inhabit the bush* : *mo gbé ibẹ li ọdun kan gbako*, *I lived there exactly one year*. (1) *Gbé* is used in the Imperative for 'mbẹ' ; as, *jẹ ki o gbé ibi*, *let it be here*. (2) *Gbé* is used in many cases pleonastically, with other verbs ; e.g., *nibo li o gbé wà ?* *where is it ?* *nibo li a o gbé ti ri i ?* *where shall we see it ?*

8. *Rí*, expresses mode of existence, being employed in conjunction with an adverb ; as, *o rí bẹ*, *abi kò rí bẹ ?* *is it so, or is it not so ?* *nkan wọnyi ha rí bẹ bi ?* *are there things so ?*

9. *Sí*, is, for the most, part used in a negative sense, to express the non-existence of a person or thing in a place, and this it does absolutely, as, *Johnu wà libẹ ?* *is John there ?* *kò sí*, (he) *is not* : *owó kò sí*, *there is no money* (absolutely) : *iya kò sí mọ*, *baba kò sí mọ*, *tani yio tọja mi ?* (my) *mother is no more*, (my) *father is no more* ; *who will take care of me ?* *Sí* preserves this meaning when it enters into compound words ; thus, *ọmọ rẹ ẹ aísí*, *his child is dead* : *iya rẹ ẹ alaisí*, *his mother is dead*.

10. *Ni* or *li*, *is*, or *it is*, is very frequently used pleonastically ; as, *on li yio ẹ e*, *he it is who will do it*, *i.e.*, *he will do it*. But it is used as the sole finite verb in a proposition ; as, *ta ni ?* *who is it ?* *emi ni*, *it is I*.

## 2.—PRIMITIVE VERBS.

Primitive verbs are of one syllable, but of two kinds—namely, such as consist of a consonant and a vowel,—the vowel being in all cases the final letter ; as *lọ*, *to go* ; and such as add to this form *n* (- *ng*) as their final letter ; as *hàn*, *to appear*.

1. In the former class of these verbs there is no limitation as to the use of either consonants or vowels, consequently, there are verbs in one or other of which

all the consonants and vowels are found ; *e.g.*, *ba*, to meet ; *de*, to arrive ; *fẹ*, to love ; *fi*, to put ; *ge*, to cut ; *gbo*, to bark ; *gbọ*, to hear ; *hù*, to germinate ; *jẹ*, to eat ; *lọ*, to go ; *kà*, to count ; *mu*, to drink ; *nà*, to trade ; *pa*, to kill ; *rà*, to buy ; *sà*, to run ; *şa*, to cut ; *tà*, to sell ; *wà*, to seek ; *yà*, to rend.

2. Primitive verbs of the second class are not so numerous as those of the first, and in verbs of this class several of both vowels and consonants are, apparently, excluded ; as, amongst vowels, *e*, *ẹ* and *o* are not found in any verbs (?) ; and there appear to be no verbs having for their first letter *b*, *j*, *l*, *m*, or *n*. With these exceptions, all, both consonants and vowels, are found in this class of verbs ; *e.g.*, *dùn*, to hurt ; *fin*, to engrave ; *gàn*, to despise ; *gbin*, to plant ; *hàn*, to appear ; *kàn*, to touch ; *pín*, to divide ; *ràn*, to send ; *san*, to reward ; *şan*, to flow ; *tàn*, to shine ; *wín*, to lend ; *yín*, to praise.

### 3.—COMPOUND OR DERIVATIVE VERBS.

The total number of primitive Yoruba verbs is not large, and is quite inadequate to the requirements of those who speak the language. It is not improbable that many verbs of this kind have become obsolete, whilst others have ceased to exist except as they form parts of compound verbs.

What was said regarding substantives and their formation, will have shown that the means exist of increasing the nouns of the language, and in modes perfectly conformable to its genius, to any extent increased acquaintance with men and things may render necessary. It is both interesting and instructive to observe how Yoruba Mind has dealt with the felt paucity of words in the language to express action, and how it has resorted to contrivances at once ingenious and effective to supply the want. There is not, indeed, the same abundance of means of effecting changes and modifications in verb-building that there is in noun-building ; but this was not to be expected.

The introduction of some foreign *names* has been deemed necessary or found convenient, as also of a few verbs. But it ought not to be needful in a language such as the Yoruba is, to draw from extraneous sources to any great extent. It has been shown that nouns can be formed with ease; and it will be shown presently that verbs can be constructed with equal ease; and it is certain that elements exist in the language which may be made to take an almost infinite number of shapes and forms. The great want is, of thinking minds, well acquainted with the capabilities of the language, in sympathy with its modes of thought and feeling, and possessed with the desire for its proper growth and development. If only these existed, the elements would coalesce, issue in new forms, and become the symbols of new or modified thought. But, unfortunately, with but few exceptions, educated Yoruba-speaking people are less interested in their language and less appreciative of its characteristics than its merits deserve. It is much to be wished that other views on this subject should prevail; and perhaps they will before very long.

Compound verbs are formed in several ways:—

1. By the addition of a noun to a verb; *e.g.*, *bẹ*, to *beg*, to *request*; *ẹbẹ*, a noun derived from the verb '*bẹ*' by means of vowel prefix; the verb and noun joined give the verb *bẹbẹ*, to *supplicate*: the difference in meaning between the simple and the compound verb is, that the latter is stronger, and covers more ground than the former. *Pa*, to *tell*, to *set forth*; *aṣẹ*, a *command*, an *order*, an *ordinance*; *Paṣẹ*, to *issue an order*, or *command*. *Da*, to *make*; *abá*, a *thought*; *dabá*, to *think*, to *imagine*. *Jẹ*, to *gain*; *ogún*, an *inheritance*; *jogún*, to *inherit* or *come into an inheritance*. *Bá*, to *meet*; *ẹru*, *fear*; *bẹru*, to *fear*.

2. A verb and a noun are joined and a preposition is inserted between them; *e.g.*, *bilere*, to *question*,—*bi*, a verb, to *ask*; *li*, in *regard to*; *ěre*, a *question*, a *matter in question*. *Dalẹbi*, to *condemn*,—from *dá*, to *make*, *create*; *li*, in *regard to*; *ẹbi*, *guilt*,—to bring in a person guilty. *Kọsilẹ*, to *forsake*,—from *kọ*, to *refuse* to *rebel*;

si, prep., *on*; and ilẹ, *the ground*—literally, to leave on the ground.

3. By joining two verbs and inserting between them a noun, which, together with them, forms a new verb; *e.g.*, maraduro, *to endure*,—from mu, *to cause*; ara, *the body*; duro (compound verb) *to stand*,—to maintain one's position, to endure. Mutiyo, *to be drunk*,—from mu, *to drink*; ọti, *intoxicating liquor*; yo, *to be full*,—to have drunk intoxicating liquor to the full. Daraya, *to be cheerful*,—from dá, *to make*; ara, *the body*; yá, *lively*,—to make the body lively.

4. Two verbs are joined as before, and a noun is placed between them, but in this case it is an object, and does not, as before, become a part of the verb; *e.g.*, fi ọna han, *to show the way*—literally, fi, *make*; ọna, *way*; hàn, *to appear, i.e., make the way appear*. Fi aja silẹ, *leave the dog alone*,—fi, *to place*; aja, *the dog*; si, *on*; ilẹ, *ground*. Mu fila rẹ lọ, *take your cap away*; mú, *take*; fila, *cap*; rẹ, *thine*; lọ, *go*,—take your cap go.

5. Compound verbs are also formed by the union of two verbs, between which the object is placed, and the second of which is followed by a noun which also becomes part of the new verb; *e.g.*, o fi mi ẹẹ ẹleya: ọ, *he*; fi, *makes*; mi, *me*; ẹẹ, *to be*; ẹleya (noun with possessive prefix), *one having ridicule—i.e., he ridicules me*.

6. Such verbs are also formed by words placed together in the following order:—a verb, a second verb, a noun, a verb, and lastly a noun: *e.g.*, ẹgbẹdegbeyọ; from ẹẹ, *to do*; gbọ, *to hear*; ède, *language*; gbọ, *to hear*, ẹyọ, *a turning over*; the meaning of these words when placed together is, *to interpret*.

7. Compound verbs are formed by joining together a verb, a noun, and a compound verb separated by the insertion between its two parts of a noun; *e.g.*, ronupiwada, *to repent*,—from rò, *to think*; inu (with the), *mind*; pa, part of compound verb; iwa, *conduct*; pa-da, *to turn, to change*—hence, to think with the mind and change the conduct.

8. Each of the two parts of a compound verb is followed by a noun ; *e.g.*, *foribale, to prostrate* ;—from *fi, to place* ; *ori, the head* ; *bá, to meet* ; *ilẹ, the ground*—to cause the head to meet the ground.

9. To name but one other mode of forming such verbs. A primitive verb is followed by a noun, this by a preposition, and this, again, by a noun ; *e.g.*, *daniloju, to be clear, to be certain (mentally)* ; from *dá, to flash* ; *eni, a person* ; *li, prep., in* ; *ojú, the eye*—to flash (as lightning) in the eye.

These instances will suffice to show how the need of a larger number of verbs than is contained in the class of primitive verbs, has been supplied, and how future wants may be provided for. These examples are of much interest too, in that they illustrate the attitudes as well as the operations of Yoruba Mind.

#### AUXILIARIES OF VERBS.

As Yoruba nouns are entirely uninflected, so Yoruba verbs are totally unconjugated. The various changes to indicate moods and tenses are effected by the use of auxiliaries. These consist in one or two instances of verbs, and in the other instances of particles. It is desirable that these should receive some notice before their places and uses are presented in their connection with a verb.

1. Nor m—is the sign of *continuance* of a state or act, and is prefixed to verbs of both the present and past tenses ; present tense, *e.g.*, *o nse e lowo, he is doing it* ; *o mbọ wa, he is coming* : *o ti nse e, he has done it*. *O ti mbá mi lo, he has accompanied me*. This particle is sometimes doubled in a sentence, and the first is attached to the conjunction, if there is one ; thus, *o nsi ntà a, and he was selling it*.

2. Ti—is the sign of the complete tenses ; *e.g.*, *mo ti se ise mi, I have done my work*.

3. O, ọ, and yio are signs of the future tense. *Nwon o se e, they will do it* : *awa o lo, we shall go*.

The difference in the uses depends on euphony.

Sometimes 'a' takes the place of o and ɔ, and by it a sort of emphatic future is formed; thus, â ʂe e, *it will (certainly) be done*.

4. Ma—expresses, in composition, somewhat of *custom*, somewhat of *obligatoriness*, and somewhat of *permission*; e.g., when it has 'a' joined to it and is 'ama,' it expresses what is *customary*; nwɔn ama lɔ, *they are accustomed to go*. In the second sense, that is, as implying *obligatoriness*, it is employed in this form; ɛnyin o ma lɔ, *you will have to go*. In the third sense—of *permission*; ɛ ma lɔ, *you may go*.

5. Ba—is an auxiliary particle of the Subjunctive mood, and as such is preceded by 'bi,' *if*. 'Bi' involves the idea of contingency, and 'ba' the idea of arriving at; e.g., bi emi ba ʂe e, *if I should do it*: bi nwɔn ba lɔ, *if they should go*.

6. Aba or iba—implies duty or obligation; e.g., ohun ti aba ʂe, *things that ought to be done*: awa iba ti lɔ, *we should have gone*. In Subjunctive sentences iba is equivalent to *if*; as, ibaʂepe iwɔ ti lɔ iwɔ iba ri, *if you had gone you would have seen*.

7. Ki, *that*, is a particle of both the Subjunctive and Imperative moods: Subjunctive, as, mo fɛ ki nwɔn ki o ʂe e, *I wish that they would do it*: Imperative, as, jɛ ki ng ʂe e, *let me do it*; ki on lɔ, *let him go*.

8. I—is joined to verbs to indicate (1) what is customary; e.g., bayi ni nwɔn ira, *so they are (accustomed) buying, i.e., so they usually buy*. (2) 'I' is used after kò, *not*, to give emphasis; thus, nwɔn kò ide, *they have not yet arrived*: nwɔn kò iʂe iʂe wɔn tan, *they have not yet finished their work*. (3) Sometimes 'i' is used only for euphony-sake; thus, eyi ki iʂe temi; *this is not mine*.

9. Tilɛ—gives emphasis in propositions where it is used; emi tilɛ ri i, *I have indeed seen it*.

10. Lè, *to be able*. In use le is equivalent to the English auxiliaries 'may,' 'can,' and 'might'; it is placed before verbs, and by means of it the Potential mood is formed; e.g., mo lè ʂe e, *I can do it*: nwɔn lè lɔ, *they may go*.



There are several other prefixes, by which the Infinitive mood and two or three kinds of verbal nouns are formed, but it will be convenient to notice these when the Infinitive mood and verbal nouns come to be considered.

It will now be apparent that although Yoruba verbs are unconjugated, the means exist of presenting *being*, a *state of being*, or *action* under the various conditions indicated by mood and tense.

### MOODS.

The Moods are five in number—namely, Indicative, Imperative, Subjunctive, Potential, and Infinitive.

### TENSES.

The Tenses are of three groups—Present, Past, and Future.

The use and force of the auxiliary particles will be more apparent and more easily understood if presented in an example exhibiting some of the changes and modifications the verb, when combined with its auxiliary particles, undergoes, in appearance and meaning, in different moods and tenses.

But before presenting such an example it may be well to fulfil a sort of promise made when speaking of pronouns. The matter then alluded to as worthy of attention is this. There is in Yoruba a euphonic system, to which reference has been several times made, which is both curious and interesting. The character of this system has been so well described by Bishop Vidal, that it will be best to quote his remarks on the subject.\*

He says, "Each personal pronoun in the singular number has three distinct forms, which cannot be used indiscriminately, but the appropriateness of which

\* Introduction to Bishop Crowther's Yoruba Vocabulary, by the Right Rev. Dr. Vidal, pages 8 and 9; edition of 1852.

depends exclusively on the vowel-sound of the verb with which they are in construction. The vowel-sound affects the vowel of the pronoun, altering it so as to make it of the same kind or quantity. The first, indeed, of the three forms first alluded to is a sort of general form, being the original and full form of the pronoun; but the use of the two latter is wholly regulated by the vowel sound of the verb.

For this purpose the vowels of the Yoruba language are apparently made to form two separate classes, according to the closeness or openness of their sound; thus :—

Close vowels, o, e, i, ĩ, u, ŭ.

Open vowels, ọ, ẹ, a, ǎ.

Then, according to the close or open sound of the vowel which occurs in the governing verb, the pronoun assumes the close or open o. The full forms of the three personal pronouns are, emi, iwọ, on. The form which they assume before the first class of vowels are mo, o, ó; and before the second class mọ, ọ, ọ́. The third personal pronoun, ó, ọ́, is marked with the acute accent, to show that the distinction between the second and third consists in the latter being enunciated with an elevation of the voice. The Yoruba language abounds in these intonations. It is observable, also, that the negative particle is subject to the same changes, its original form being ki, before close vowels ko, and before open, kọ. This system of mutations, which I would call the *Vocalic Euphony System*, may be exhibited in the following table :—

VERBS.	PRONOUNS.			NEG. PART.
	1.	2.	3.	
Ni, Mbẹ, Ẹ, &c.	Emi	Iwọ	On	Ki.
Ko, Ẹ, Ẹi, Ẹí, Ku, Lú.	Mo	o	ó	Ko.
Kọ, Fẹ, La, Ka.	Mọ	ọ	ọ́	Kọ.

There is still a further development of this system in the case of the third personal pronoun, when used

objectively. It consists in that case of a single vowel-sound, which varies not only according to the class of the vowel in the verb, but according to its individual sound ; so that it possesses no less than seven forms, whose use is not optional, but regulated by the verb."

The following examples will illustrate these remarks, in so far as they have reference to the third person singular, in the objective case.

1. Primitive Verbs :—

- (1) *Śá*, to cut ; *nwọn śá a*, they cut him (her or it).  
*De*, to bind ; *enyin de e*, ye bound him (her or it).  
*Bẹ*, to beseech ; *mo bẹ ẹ*, I besought him (or her).  
*Di*, to pack ; *o di i*, he packed it.  
*Bó*, to peel ; *nwọn bó o*, they peeled it.  
*Fọ*, to break ; *awa fọ ọ*, we broke it.  
*Wù*, to please ; *o wù u*, it pleased him (or her).

The vowel which stands for the object may mean *he*, *she*, or *it* ; the context must show what the gender is.

(2) It will be remembered that primitive verbs are of two classes, namely, such as end in a vowel-sound, as in the instances just given, and such as have *n* (*ng*) for their final letter. The occurrence of 'n' in the second of these two classes of verbs, does not interfere with the rule by which the vowel of the verb becomes the object following it, when the object is the third personal pronoun singular ; *e.g.*,

- Rán*, to send ; *ọkọnrin nà rán a*, the man sent him.  
*Gbìn*, to plant ; *o gbìn i*, he planted it.  
*Gbọn*, to bail out ; *o gbọn ọ*, he bailed it out.  
*Fun*, to squeeze ; *o fun u*, he squeezed it.

2. The same rule holds good with regard to compound verbs, but with this difference, that the personal pronoun is inserted *between* the two parts of the divided verb ; *e.g.* *gbekalẹ*, to put down, to place on the ground ; *o gbe e kalẹ*, he placed it on the ground. The verb is formed thus :—*gbe*, to put ; *kà*, to sit ; *ilẹ*, the ground. From which it will be seen that in such cases the personal pronoun is inserted *between* the two primitive verbs, of which, together with a noun attached to the latter of the two, the compound verb is formed, and

that the vowel-sound of the former of the two verbs is the object. Delori, *to crown*; nwọn de e lori, *they crowned him*. The compound verb in this instance consists of, (1) a verb; (2) a preposition; (3) a noun. Sọ̀nù, *to lose*; awa sọ̀ ọ̀ nù, *we lost it*. The compound verb here consists simply of two primitive verbs. These examples show the connection of the euphonic system with compound verbs, and the mode in which, with many such verbs, the third personal pronoun singular is used.

3. There remains one other application of the euphonic concord to be noticed, which is, that when the third personal pronoun singular follows a preposition, it takes the vowel-sound of the preposition, and not, as in the cases noted, that of the verb; e.g., wi, *to tell*; fun, *to*; o wi fun u (not o wi i fun), *he told to him or he told him*: o rán ọ̀rẹ̀ rẹ̀ sí i, *he sent friend his to him, or he sent his friend to him*. O duro tì i, *he stood by him (near him)*. O se ilekun mọ̀ ọ̀, *he closed the door against him*.

An example may now be given to illustrate the application of some of the preceding remarks. For this purpose it will not be needful to present a complete paradigm of a verb.

## RÍ, TO SEE.

### ACTIVE VOICE.

#### Indicative Mood.

#### PRESENT AND PAST INDEFINITE TENSES.\*

##### *Singular.*

##### *Plural.*

- |                                          |                                     |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Emi rí, <i>I see or saw.</i>          | 1. Awa rí, <i>we see or saw.</i>    |
| 2. Iwọ̀ rí, <i>thou seest or sawest.</i> | 2. Ẹ̀nyin rí, <i>ye see or saw.</i> |
| 3. On rí, <i>he † sees or saw.</i>       | 3. Nwọn rí, <i>they see or saw.</i> |

\* The Yoruba has only one form for both the Present and Past Indefinite Tenses.

† The third person singular is either *he*, *she*, or *it*; but for the sake of brevity only the masculine will be given in the English.

## PRESENT IMPERFECT TENSE.

*Singular.*

1. Emi nrí, *I am seeing.*
2. Iwọ nrí, *thou art seeing.*
3. On nrí, *he is seeing.*

*Plural.*

1. Awa nrí, *we are seeing.*
2. Enyin nrí, *ye are seeing.*
3. Nwọn nrí, *they are seeing.*

## PAST INDEFINITE TENSE.

*Singular.*

1. Emi wà rí, *I saw.*
2. Iwọ wà rí, *thou sawest.*
3. On wà rí, *he saw.*

*Plural.*

1. Awa wà rí, *we saw.*
2. Enyin wà rí, *ye saw.*
3. Nwọn wà rí, *they saw.*

## PRESENT COMPLETE AND PAST COMPLETE TENSES.

*Singular.*

1. Emi ti rí, *I have or had seen.*
2. Iwọ ti rí, *thou hast or hadst seen.*
3. On ti rí, *he has or had seen.*

*Plural.*

1. Awa ti rí, *we have or had seen.*
2. Enyin ti rí, *ye have or had seen.*
3. Nwọn ti rí, *they have or had seen.*

## PRESENT AND PAST PERFECT OF CONTINUED ACTION.\*

*Singular.*

1. Emi ti nrí, *I have or had been seeing.*
2. Iwo ti nrí, *thou hast or hadst been seeing.*
3. On ti nrí, *he has or had been seeing.*

---

\* The Yoruba has only one form for both Present Complete and Past Complete Tenses.

*Plural.*

1. Awa ti nrí, *we have or had been seeing.*
2. Enyin ti nrí, *ye have or had been seeing.*
3. Nwọn ti nrí, *they have or had been seeing.*

## EMPHATIC PAST TENSE.

*Singular.*

1. Emi tilẹ rí, *I have (indeed) seen.*
2. Iwọ tilẹ rí, *thou hast ( „ ) seen.*
3. On tilẹ rí, *he has ( „ ) seen.*

*Plural.*

1. Awa tilẹ rí, *we have (indeed) seen.*
2. Enyin tilẹ rí, *ye have ( „ ) seen.*
3. Nwọn tilẹ rí, *they have ( „ ) seen.*

## FUTURE INDEFINITE TENSE.

*Singular.*

1. Emi yio rí, *I shall see.*
2. Iwọ yio rí, *thou wilt see.*
3. On yio rí, *he will see.*

*Plural.*

1. Awa yio rí, *we shall see.*
2. Enyin yio rí, *ye will see.*
3. Nwọn yio rí, *they will see.*

## FUTURE COMPLETE TENSE.

*Singular.*

1. Emi yio ti rí, *I shall have seen.*
2. Iwọ yio ti rí, *thou wilt have seen.*
3. On yio ti rí, *he will have seen.*

*Plural.*

1. Awa yio ti rí, *we shall have seen.*
2. Enyin yio ti rí, *ye will have seen.*
3. Nwọn yio ti rí, *they will have seen.*

## FUTURE IMPERFECT TENSE.

*Singular.*

1. Emi yio ma rí, *I shall be seeing.*
2. Iwọ yio ma rí, *thou wilt be seeing.*
3. On yio ma rí, *he will be seeing.*

*Plural.*

1. Awa yio ma rí, *we shall be seeing.*
2. Enyin yio ma rí, *ye will be seeing.*
3. Nwọn yio ma rí, *they will be seeing.*

## FUTURE PERFECT OF CONTINUED ACTION.

*Singular.*

1. Emi yio ti ma rí, *I shall have been seeing.*
2. Iwo yio ti ma rí, *thou wilt have been seeing.*
3. On yio ti ma rí, *he will have been seeing.*

*Plural.*

1. Awa yio ti ma rí, *we shall have been seeing.*
2. Enyin yio ti ma rí, *ye will have been seeing.*
3. Nwọn yio ti ma rí, *they will have been seeing.*

It is not needful to enter so fully into particulars relating to other moods as has been done with regard to the Indicative. The part played by particles in varying the verb so as to express it in its different tenses will now be apparent. It will be sufficient to indicate in the briefest manner how moods also are dependent on particles for their formation.

## Potential Mood.

### PRESENT INDEFINITE TENSE.

#### *Singular.*

1. Mo lè rí, *I may or can see.*
2. Iwọ lè rí, *thou mayst or canst see.*
3. On lè rí, *he may or can see.*

#### *Plural.*

1. Awa lè rí, *we may or can see.*
2. Enyin lè rí, *ye may or can see.*
3. Nwọn lè rí, *they may or can see.*

Other tenses of the Potential mood may pass without notice.

## Imperative Mood.

This mood is remarkable for this, that it has three or four forms of saying what is very nearly the same in meaning in each form ; *e.g.*,

Rí, or, iwọ rí,	}	<i>See or see thou.</i>
Ki o rí, or, Ki iwọ ki o rí,		
Ma rí, or iwọ ma rí,		
Ki o ma rí, or Ki iwọ ki o ma rí,		
Ki ng rí,	}	<i>Let me see.</i>
Ki emi rí,		
Ki emi ki o rí,		
Ki o rí,	}	<i>Let him see.</i>
Ki on rí,		
Ki on ki o rí,		

## Subjunctive Mood.

The Yoruba language is well supplied with the means of expressing the protasis of conditional sentences. Each variation is made by the use of particles, such as, *bi, if; ki, that; bi—tilẹ, though; ibasepe, if* (with a present or past complete tense in the apodosis).



## PRESENT INDEFINITE TENSE.

Bi, ki, bi—tilẹ, bikoşepe.

*Singular.*

1. Bi mo rí, *if I see.*
2. Bi iwọ rí, *if thou see.*
3. Bi on rí, *if he sees.*

*Plural.*

1. Bi awa rí, *if we see.*
2. Bi ọnyin rí, *if ye see.*
3. Bi nwọn rí, *if they see.*

Ki emi rí, *that I see.*Bi emi tilẹ rí, *though I see.*Bikoşepe emi rí, *unless I see.***Infinitive Mood.**

Since verbs are unconjugated and their root-forms appear in nearly all moods and tenses, and are modified in but a comparatively few cases by prefixes added to the root-forms, a little attention is sometimes needed to discover the Infinitive of some verbs; but the difficulty arising out of this want of variety of form is not great.

1. Very often a verb in the Infinitive mood is recognised as such only by observing its position and purpose; as, *mo fẹ lọ, I wish to go.* When a second verb in the Infinitive is added, there is a tendency to lengthen the vowel of the former; thus, *mo fẹ lẹ wò o, I want to go to look at it.*

2. Sometimes the preposition 'lati,' *to,* is used before the root-form of the verb to be placed in the Infinitive; as, *mo fẹ lati ẹ e, I want to do it.*

3. *Ki, that (conj.),* is often employed, and it forms a Subjunctive where in English an Infinitive would be used; *e.g., 'he told me to do it,'* would be in Yoruba, *o sọ fun mi ki ng ẹ e, he told me that I (should) do it.*

4. For the sake of convenience the root-form of verbs has, in the preceding remarks, been regarded as the Infinitive, and for the same reason this form will continue to be dealt with as an Infinitive; but this is not justified by any sufficient connection which has been discovered to exist between this form and this mood. It would probably be best to regard every verb in its root-form as absolutely Infinitive, and as merely expressing a bare verbal notion, without any reference whatever to person, number, or time; any meaning as regards these being developed by means of the various particles employed as auxiliaries. The root-form is, if it must be connected with any mood at all, the present and past indefinite tenses of the Indicative mood (*q.v.*). It is also used, subject to certain modifications, in the second person, both singular and plural, of the Imperative mood, and in the Infinitive, when it is the second or second and third verb in a sentence and used without reference to person, number, and tense. *Rí*, then, would not mean 'to see,' but rather 'see' or 'saw,' the present and past indefinite tenses of the Indicative. If so, this would be true of all verbs in that form. To the root-form the prefix 'i' is added; thus, *rí*, *iri*, *to see*; or *ati*, as *atiri*, *to see* or *to be seen*. The latter is a Passive Infinitive as well as an Active one, as is also *atimari*, *to see* or *to be seen*. As it will be needful to revert to this formation again it may for the present be left.

But before passing from Active verbs a brief notice may be bestowed on one or two other matters worthy of note.

1. The Indicative mood, like the Imperative, has in several tenses more than one form. In mentioning these, only the forms of the first person singular will be given, as, if it is desired, there will now be no difficulty in filling up the forms in the three persons and in both numbers,

## PRESENT IMPERFECT TENSE.

Emi nrí, } *I am seeing.*  
Emi ni nrí, }

## PRESENT AND PAST COMPLETE TENSES.

Emi ti rí, } *I have or had seen.*  
Emi li o ti rí, }

In the Future Indefinite Tense there are no fewer than five forms.

Emi o rí, } *I shall see.*  
Ng o rí, }  
Emi a rí, }  
Emi ni o rí, }  
Emi ni yio rí, }

2. Interrogative and Negative sentences are formed by means of particles: such are of nearly all tenses.

## 1.—Interrogative.

## PRESENT INDEFINITE TENSE.

*Singular.*

1. Emi rí bi? *do I see?*
2. Iwọ rí bi? *dost thou see?*
3. On rí bi? *does he see?*

*Plural.*

1. Awa rí bi? *do we see?*
2. Ẹnyin rí bi? *do ye see?*
3. Nwọn rí bi? *do they see?*

There is a somewhat different form, but with the same meaning as the one just given; it is this:—emi ha rí bi? *do I see?* etc.

## 2.—Negative.

### PRESENT COMPLETE AND PAST COMPLETE TENSES.

#### *Singular.*

1. Emi kò ti irí, *I have or had not seen.*
2. Iwọ kò ti irí, *thou hast or hadst not seen.*
3. On kò ti irí, *he has or had not seen.*

#### *Plural.*

1. Awa kò ti iri, *we have or had not seen.*
2. Ẹnyin kò ti iri, *ye have or had not seen.*
3. Nwọn kò ti iri, *they have or had not seen.*

### PASSIVE VOICE.

The Yoruba has, properly speaking, no Passive Voice. That which in other languages constitutes the difference between the Active and Passive of verbs, namely, that the direct Object of the Active Voice becomes the Subject of the Passive, is represented by no corresponding change in Yoruba. How the difference in meaning between the Active and Passive of Yoruba verbs is expressed has now to be explained.

The translations given of the illustrative examples will be as nearly exact and word for word as circumstances will allow, since this will afford the best means of judging of the nature and character of the subject, and will lessen the need for explanatory notes. It will not be attempted to give all the tenses of the verb, but so many only will be given as will serve the purposes of illustration.

I. Very often 'a,' the contracted form of awọn, *they*, is used; thus, a rí, mi, literally, they see me, *i.e., I am seen by them.*

## Indicative Mood.

### PRESENT INDEFINITE TENSE.

#### *Singular.*

1. A rí mi, *they see me.*
2. A rí ɔ, *they see thee.*
3. A rí i, *they seen him.*

#### *Plural.*

1. A rí wa, *they see us.*
2. A rí nyin, *they see you.*
3. A rí wɔn, *they see them.*

### PRESENT PERFECT TENSE.

A ti rí mi, *they have seen me, i.e., I have been seen by them.*

#### *Singular.*

1. A ti rí mi, *they have seen me.*
2. A ti rí ɔ, *they have seen thee.*
3. A ti rí i, *they have seen him.*

#### *Plural.*

1. A ti rí wa, *they have seen us.*
2. A ti rí, nyin, *they have seen you.*
3. A ti rí wɔn, *they have seen them.*

### FUTURE INDEFINITE TENSE.

A o rí mi, *they will see me, i.e., I shall be seen by them.*

#### *Singular.*

1. A o rí mi, *they will see me.*
2. A o rí ɔ, *they will see thee.*
3. A o rí i, *they will see him.*

*Plural.*

1. A o rí wa, *they will see us.*
2. A o rí nyin, *they will see you.*
3. A o rí wọn, *they will see them.*

**Imperative Mood.**

Ki a rí ọ, *that they see thee, i.e., be thou seen by them.*  
 Ki a rí nyin, *that they see you, i.e., be ye seen by them.*

**Subjunctive Mood.**

Bi a rí mi, *if they see me, i.e., if I am seen by them.*

*Singular.*

1. Bi a rí mi, *if they see me.*
2. Bi a rí ọ, *if they see thee.*
3. Bi a rí i, *if they see him.*

*Plural.*

1. Bi a rí wa, *if they see us.*
2. Bi a rí nyin, *if they see you.*
3. Bi a rí wọn, *if they see them.*

**Other forms :—**

Ki a rí mi, *that they see me.*  
 Biobaṣepe or biotileṣepe a rí mi, *though they see me.*  
 Bikoṣepe a rí mi, *unless they see me.*

**PRESENT PERFECT TENSE.**

Bi a ba ti rí mi, *though they should have seen me, i.e., though I should have been seen by them.*

*Singular.*

1. Bi a ba ti rí mi, *though they should have seen me.*
2. Bi a ba ti rí ọ, *though they should have seen thee.*
3. Bi a ba ti rí i, *though they should have seen him.*

*Plural.*

1. Bi a ba ti rí wa, *though they should have seen us.*
2. Bi a ba ti rí nyin, *though they should have seen you.*
3. Bi a ba ti rí wọn, *though they should have seen them.*

II. A second mode of expressing the Passive of verbs is, that the Object is placed first, *li, it-is*, is added, and the 'a,' the contracted form of *awọn, they*, is retained ; *e.g., emi li a rí, me it is they see.*

**Indicative Mood.****PRESENT INDEFINITE TENSE.**

*Emi li a rí, me it is they see, i.e., I am seen by them.*

*Singular.*

1. *Emi li a rí, me it is they see.*
2. *Iwọ li a rí, thee it is they see.*
3. *On li a rí, him it is they see.*

*Plural.*

1. *Awa li a rí, us it is they see.*
2. *Enyin li a rí, you it is they see.*
3. *Awọn li a rí, them it is they see.*

**PRESENT PERFECT TENSE.**

*Emi li a ti rí, me it is they have seen, or, I have been seen by them.*

*Singular.*

1. *Emi li a ti rí, me it is they have seen.*
2. *Iwọ li a ti rí, thee it is they have seen.*
3. *On li a ti rí, him it is they have seen.*

*Plural.*

1. Awa li a ti rí, *us it is they have seen.*
2. Ènyin li a ti rí, *you it is they have seen.*
3. Awọn li a ti rí, *them it is they have seen.*

III. Some Compound verbs have a meaning so far of a Passive kind that they will readily take the place of Passive verbs; *e.g.*, pamọ, *to preserve*; o pamọ, *it is preserved*: bajẹ, *to spoil*; o bajẹ, *it is spoiled*.

In the Passive as well as in the Active Voice, Interrogative and Negative sentences are formed by means of particles; thus, a ti rí mi bi? *have they seen me, or, have I been seen by them?* A kò ti iri mi, *they have not seen me, or, I have not been seen by them.*

## VERBAL NOUNS.

Attention has been already given to the modes in which nouns are formed from verbs. It will be convenient here to show how verbal nouns are formed from verbs. It was promised, when speaking of the prefixes to verbs, that some notice would be taken of several prefixes not then specified. These will be seen in the following examples. The verb 'rí' will be taken again for the purposes of illustration:—

Rí, (the radical idea) *to see* (regarded as an infinitive).

Írí, (abstract prefix) *to see, seeing*.

Arí, (concrete prefix) *to be seen, that which is seen*.

Atírí, (inchoative prefix) *to see, to be seen, a seeing*.

Rírí, (reduplicated prefix) *a seeing, a being seen*.

Aírí, (negative prefix) *a not seeing, a not being seen*.

Láírí, (possessive negative prefix) *the not possessing a sight*.

Atímárí, (continuative prefix) *a continued seeing, or, being seen*.

It will not escape notice that these verbal nouns are in several cases both Active and Passive. They are to the Yoruba language very much what infinitives, participles, and gerunds are to the English.



## ADVERBS.

There are many points connected with Yoruba adverbs which are interesting, and several things which are curious. A careful study of this class of words, especially in their connection with the words they are used to qualify, would, like the study of Yoruba substantives, compound verbs, and it may be added, of prepositions, help greatly towards obtaining an insight into the operations of Yoruba Mind. But to attempt to enter fully into such a subject as this is quite beyond the object in view in this paper. Nothing more than the barest outline can be offered here. As will presently appear, the number of adverbs, properly such, is below the requirements of the language. The deficiency is made up in a variety of ways. As the different kinds of adverbs are very much the same as in other languages, it is hardly needful to enter into particulars concerning them.

Looking to the origin of words used as adverbs, they are found to be of several different classes.

1. Primitive Adverbs. This class is smaller in number than might be expected. They are such as the following : lai, *ever* ; bẹ, *so* ; ti, *yet* ; na, *already* ; ẹn, *yes* ; ndao, *no* ; etc. The use of the last of these words, 'ndao,' is now confined very much to one tribe of Yoruba-speaking people—the Egbas. The Yorubas proper, who are supposed to speak the language more correctly and with somewhat more refinement, use bẹkọ, *not so*, a compound word, in place of 'ndao,' so that it is not improbable that this word may yet be frowned out of use, as many primitive adverbs may have been already, and are now lost to the language, and hence the comparative fewness of those that remain.

2. Some words are both adjectives and adverbs ; as, o şe enia rere, *he is a good person* : o şe e rere, *he did it well*.

3. A few verbs are employed adverbially ; o bi i şubu, *he pushed him down* : o gbe e dide, *he raised him up* ;

o tun ri i, *he saw him again*. The words, 'şubu,' 'dide,' and 'tun' are verbs made to do service for adverbs.

4. Nouns are sometimes used as adverbs; as, o lo oke, *he went up*: o şe dię, *he did little*. 'Oke' and 'dię' are nouns.

5. Many adverbs of *time* and *place* are formed by the addition of the prefix 'li' or 'ni' to a noun; thus, oni, *this day*; li-oni or loni, *to-day*: ęla, *the day after this*; lola, *to-morrow*, etc. Ibi, *this place*; libi, *here*: ibę, *that place*; libę, *there*, etc.

6. Several words may be joined to form compound adverbs; e.g., nigbagbogbo—from ni, prep., *in*; igba, noun, *time*; gbogbo, adj., *all*—nigbagbogbo, *always*. Nitorikini—from ni, prep., *in*; itori, noun, *cause, reason*; ki, interrogative pronoun, *what*; ni, substantive verb, *it is*—nitorikini, *wherefore*.

7. A great number of adverbs are formed by reduplication. To consider these fully would necessitate attention being given to a number of different points; one only will be noticed. Adverbs of *recurrence* are formed by reduplication; e.g., ęję, *a day*; reduplicated form ęjęę, before which, to make it an adverb, li, prep., *in*, is placed, thus, li-ęjęę or lojęęę, *daily*: ęşę, *a week*; ęşęşę, loşęşę, *weekly*: oşu, *a month*; loşoşu, *monthly*: ędun, *a year*; lođędun, *yearly*.

When speaking of the comparison of adjectives, it was intimated that the Yoruba was rather deficient in the means of making such comparisons as closely and with as much definiteness as is at times desirable. At first sight it might appear as if the same were true of adverbs. But a closer inspection will show that this is not the case; that, on the contrary, they are, in some respects, peculiarly well adapted, and in a way entirely their own, to set forth not only the degrees but the qualities also of the words to which they are attached. This remarkable feature in the system of Yoruba adverbs has been described by Bishop Vidal in such a lucid, interesting, and, when the very extensive acquaintance with African and other languages he possessed is

borne in mind, it may be added, in such an authoritative manner, that his account of this characteristic of Yoruba adverbs will be best given in his own words.

He says,\* "The adverb is a part of speech in which we do not commonly recognise any characteristic sufficiently prominent to become a distinctive mark of any language, either generic or specific. But in the case of the Yoruba there is a most observable peculiarity in the use of this part of speech, which must, I think, prove to be a distinctive mark. Speaking in general terms,† we may say that each individual adverb of qualification possesses an idiosyncrasy of its own which altogether incapacitates it from supplying the place of another. It contains within itself the idea of the word it is employed to qualify, although, as to form and derivation, totally unconnected with that word. In this way "almost every adjective and verb has its own peculiar adverb to express it quality," or rather its degree. This peculiarity must certainly greatly increase the expressiveness of the language. Thus, for example, in sentences where we should employ the word "very," let the subject of which we were speaking be what it might, the Yoruba would express the same meaning with far more of definiteness and precision by a separate adverb in each case, no two of which could be used convertibly. We should say, for instance, "the tree is *very* high"; "the bird flies *very* high"; "this cloth is *very* yellow"; "the scarlet is *very* red"; "the glass is *very* dazzling." But the Yoruban would vary his adverb in every example; thus, "igi ga *fiofio*"; "ẹiyẹ fo *tiantian*"; "aṣọ yi pọn *rokiroki*"; "ododo pipa *roro*"; awojijin ndan *maranmaran*." It is true we have adverbs which can be applied to certain classes of subjects, as the word "beautifully" can only be used concerning objects of sense; but even here the tendency to generalise is observable: "beautifully" belongs of course in its

---

\* Introductory Remarks on Bishop Crowther's Yoruba Vocabulary, p. 15.

† The Bishop's saving clause must be allowed its fullest latitude. The point on which he insists is very real, but hardly of such universal application as his words would imply.

original acceptation, only to objects of *sight*, as, "the cloth is beautifully yellow"; but we employ it constantly in reference to objects of hearing, speaking of harmony as beautifully soft, and so on. In the Yoruba, on the contrary, we observe the working of a principle the very opposite of this generalisation. Thus the word "fiofio," used above, can only apply to the idea of height, and that, too, only when the subject of which it is predicated is connected with the ground, and stands upon it; when the idea of height implies distance from the ground and separation from it, another distinct adverb, "tiantian," must be employed. So, too, the adverb "rokiroki" can only be used of a *yellow* colour, although the word itself does not mean yellow; and "roro" only of *red*, or, at least, dark colour, though the word has no such meaning; the fact being, that they imply ideas connected with those colours respectively, and not with the category of colour generally. And this principle seems to pervade the language; so that in order to speak it correctly it is necessary to know not only the verb or adjective which expresses what we wish to say, but also the peculiar and appropriate adverb which denotes the degree or quality attaching to it. This singular feature of the Yoruba language is unique."

#### PREPOSITIONS.

Both as regards their formation and meaning, Yoruba prepositions are interesting, in that they illustrate the mental attitude of the Yoruban in his contemplation of the bearing of one object in its relation to another. As regards their origin, Yoruba prepositions are of three kinds—primitive, verbal, and compound.

1. Primitive prepositions are very few in number, simple in character, but expressive; *e.g.*, *ti*, *from*; *si*, *to*; *ni* or *li*, *in*. The three ideas involved in them are *departure from*, *motion towards*, and *rest in*, an object; as, *mo ti ibẹ de*, I came *from* there: *nwọn nlọ si ile nyin* they are going *to* your house: *iya mi wà ni ile*, my mother is *in* the house.

2. A few verbs are used as prepositions ; as *fun*, v., *to give* ; *fun*, prep., *to* ; *mọ*, v., *to adhere to* ; *mọ*, prep., *against* : *ba*, v., *to meet* ; *ba*, prep., *with*. *O wi i fun mi*, he told it *to me* : *ọkọnrin nà se ilẹkun mọ wọn*, the man shut the door *against* them : *o ba wa lọ*, he went *with* us.

3. The preposition *si*, *to*, and *ni or' li*, *in*, are joined to nouns of several kinds to form compound prepositions ; e.g., *iwaju*, *front*, *presence* ; *siwaju*, *before*, *in presence of* (motion towards) : *niwaju*, *in presence of*, or *before* (rest in) : *ẹba*, *brink*, or *edge* (as of a river) ; *lẹba*, *beside*, *at the side of*. *Nwọn mu u wa siwaju ọba*, *they brought him before the king* : *o wà niwaju baba rẹ*, *he is in the presence of his father* : *nwon nduro lẹba ọdọ*, *they are standing beside the river*.

A somewhat different formation of compound prepositions is the following. Some nouns are both concrete and abstract ; e.g., *inu*, *the inside* (concrete), and *insideness* (abstract) : *ori*, *the head* (concrete) ; *headship* (abstract). To these forms is added the preposition 'li' or 'si,' and the new prepositions 'ninu' and 'sinu,' *in* or *into*, are obtained, also 'lori' and 'sori' *upon* : prepositions of a more expressive kind than the primitive ones ; as, *o fi i sori aja*, *he placed it upon the ceiling* : *o joko lori aga*, *he sat upon a chair* : *nwọn fi i sinu àpọ*, *they put it into the bag* : *ọmọdekọnrin nwẹ ninu ọdọ*, *the boy is swimming in the river*.

Conjunctions and Interjections may be passed without notice.

The following in Yoruba accompanied by a literal or as nearly literal translation as may be, will show how the words of the language stand related to one another in composition.

Gbogbo ẹranko li o fẹrẹ ni iri ti o ba iwa rẹ mu. Awọn ẹranko ti o ndọdẹ li oru, bi ologbo, ekute, kiniun, ati amọtekun li o ni irunmu. Elomi rò pé nwọn jẹ ohunelo lati fi kàn nkan. Awọn ẹranko rusurusu ti nlo sinu omi ni irun pupọ ni ikun wọn ; awọn ti o sì ngbé ilẹ gbigbé ni irun pupọ li ẹhin. Ẹsìn ti ntẹ ilẹ lile ni patako ti o niri ; ibakasie ti nrin asale yanrin ni esẹ

títẹ, ti kò nẹ ki o rì sinu yanrin. Awọn ẹranko ti o ntú ilẹ, bi ẹlẹde, ọya, ati asin, ni imu bọli. Erin ti ọrùn rẹ kuru ti o sì nipọn ni ọwọ lja ti o fi nmú onjẹ rẹ ; omiran nfi iwo jà, bi malu ; ati omiran nfi ẹkana jà, bi ologbo.

Gbogbo	ẹranko	li	o	fẹrẹ	ni
All	animals	it-is	they	nearly	have
irí	ti	o	ba	iwa	wọn
(an) appearance	which	it	with	condition	their
mu.	Awọn	ẹranko	ti	o	
agrees.	They	(the) animals	which	they	
ndọde	li		oru		bi
pursue their prey	in	(the) night	(or darkness),		as
ologbo,	ekute,	kiniun	li	o	ni
(the) cat,	(the) rat,	(the) lion	it-is	they	have
irunimu.	Elomi	rò	pé	nwọn	jẹ
whiskers.	Some	think	that	they	are
ohunelo	lati	fi	kàn	nkan.	Awọn
instruments	to	with	feel	things.	They
ẹranko	onirun	rusurusu	ti		
(the) animals	hairy	brownish	which	they	
nlọ		sinu	omi	ni	irun
(are accustomed to) going		into	water	have	hair
pupọ ni ikùn wọn.	Şugbọn	awọn	ti	o	
much on belly their.	But	they	which	they	
ngbé	ilẹ	gbigbẹ	ni	irun	pupọ li
inhabit (the) land	dry	have	hair	much	on
ẹhin.	Ẹsin	ti	o	ntẹ	
(the) back.	(The) horse	which	it	treads	
ilẹ lile ni	patako.	ti	o	nimi ;	
ground hard has	hoofs	which	they	are strong ;	
ibakasiẹ	ti	nrin	aşalẹ	yanrin	
(the) camel	which	traverses	(the) desert	sandy	

ni      ẹsẹ      titẹ      ti      kò      nje      ki  
 has      feet      flat      which      not      do allow      that  
 they      rì      sinu      yanrin.      Awọn      ẹranko  
          o      sink      into      (the) sand.      They      animals  
 ti      ntú      ilẹ,      bi      ẹlẹde,      ati  
 which      break up      (the) ground,      as      (the) pig,      and  
 ọya      ni      imu      bọli.      Erin  
 hedgehog      have      (a) snout      long.      (The) Elephant  
 ti      ọrùn      rẹ      kuru      ti      o      sì      ni  
 which      neck      its      is-short      which      it      and      has  
 ipọn,      ni      ọwọ      ija      ti      o      fi  
 thickness,      has      (a) hand      (of) I fight      which      it      with  
 nmu      onje      rẹ;      omiran      nfi      iwo      jà,      bi  
 takes      food      its;      others      with      horns      fight,      as  
 malú,      ati      omiran      nfi      ẹkana      jà,      bi  
 (the) cow,      and      others      with      (the) claws      fight,      as  
 ologbo.  
 (the) cat.















